

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-07

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INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MUSCUT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
CINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

S E C R E T TEHRAN 02657

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, CU, ET, UR
SUBJ: FUTURE REDEPLOYMENT OF CUBAN COMBAT TROOPS AND THEIR
SOVIET COMMANDERS CURRENTLY IN ETHIOPIA

1. NOW THAT COMBAT OPERATIONS IN THE OGADEN HAVE APPARENTLY
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TERMINATED, THIS REGION WILL FOCUS ON THE FUTURE REDEPLOYMENT
OF THE CUBAN COMBAT TROOPS AND THEIR SOVIET COMMANDERS WHICH
ARE CURRENTLY IN ETHIOPIA. MOST SPECULATION
SUGGESTS THEY MAY BE USED ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA, AGAINST
DJIBOUTI OR SUDAN, OR EVEN FURTHER SOUTH IN THE TURBULENT
REGIONS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

2. I WOULD LIKE TO FLAG ANOTHER POSSIBILITY, WHICH STRIKES ME AS MORE DANGEROUS AND MORE DIRECTLY RELATED TO U.S. INTERESTS. THAT IS THE PROSPECT THAT THESE FORCES MAY BE MOVED TO ADEN AND EVENTUALLY DEPLOYED ALONG THE PDRY FRONTIER WITH OMAN. ALTHOUGH THE FIGHTING IN THE DHOFAR REGION IS CURRENTLY QUIESCENT, IT COULD FLARE UP AGAIN AND CUBAN FORCES COULD BE USED IN A RELATIVELY AMBIGUOUS ROLE IN THAT OPERATION.

3. IF THIS WERE TO HAPPEN, IRAN WOULD DOUBTLESS FEEL OBLIGATED TO INCREASE ITS COMBAT ROLE IN THE DHOFAR SINCE THE SHAH FEELS STRONGLY THAT A COMMUNIST DOMINATION OF OMAN (AND HENCE OF THE STRAITS OF HORMOZ AT THE MOUTH OF THE PERSIAN GULF) CANNOT BE TOLERATED. THE SCOPE OF THIS MILITARY OPERATION, IF CUBANS AND SOVIETS (AND POSSIBLY IRAQIS) BECAME INVOLVED, WOULD BE FAR GREATER THAN EARLIER IRANIAN MILITARY ACTION IN THE DHOFAR REGION.

4. A MAJOR EXTENSION OF IRANIAN FORCES INTO OMAN, COUPLED WITH A POSSIBLE RENEWAL OF TENSIONS WITH IRAQ, AND ACCOMPANIED BY THOSE WHICH EXTERNALLY INSPIRED "RELIGIOUS" RIOTS SUCH AS THOSE WHICH RECENTLY OCCURRED IN TABRIZ, COULD PRODUCE SERIOUS TURMOIL IN THE PERSIAN GULF WITH DIRECT IMPACT UPON THE SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES, WESTERN EUROPE AND JAPAN.

5. IT THEREFORE SEEMS HIGHLY IMPORTANT THAT WE MOBILIZE
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WHATEVER EFFECTIVE RESOURCES WE HAVE AVAILABLE TO PRECLUDE A CUBAN-SOVIET COMBAT REDEPLOYMENT FROM ETHIOPIA TO ADEN. ALTHOUGH WE SEEM TO HAVE ACCEPTED A CUBAN COMBAT PRESENCE IN AFRICA AS A FACT OF LIFE, I SEE NO REASON THAT WE SHOULD ACQUIESCE IN THE EXTENSION OF CUBAN MILITARY PRESENCE TO THE ASIAN CONTINENT.

6. IN ORDER TO PUT SOME TEETH IN OUR EFFORTS, I WOULD SUGGEST WE EXAMINE WHAT CONTINGENT APPLICATIONS OF U.S. MILITARY POWER COULD BE BROUGHT TO BEAR IN ORDER TO GIVE THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS PAUSE BEFORE THEY EMBARK ON ANY ADVENTURES ON THE SOUTHERN COAST OF THE ARABIAN PENINSULA. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT ALL THE MILITARY FACTORS ARE IN OUR FAVOR, ESPECIALLY IF WE ASSUME A POTENTIAL IRANIAN GROUND FORCE INVOLVEMENT. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE MILITARY PROBLEM HAS TO BE HANDLED EXCLUSIVELY BY IRANIAN FORCES, WITH THEIR HOME BASES ADJACENT TO THE MILITARY POWER OF THE SOVIET UNION, THE ODDS WOULD SEEM TO FAVOR THE CUBAN-SOVIET COMBINATION.

7. I HAVE NOT RPT NOT DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH THE SHAH, BUT GIVEN HIS EXPERTISE IN WORST-CASE ANALYSIS, I WOULD EXPECT HIM SOON TO RAISE THIS PROBLEM WITH ME. I WOULD APPRECIATE AUTHORITA-

TIVE INSTRUCTIONS AS TO THE NATURE OF THE RESPONSE I SHOULD
BE PREPARED TO MAKE.
SULLIVAN

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NNN

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